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ARMY ACTIONS IN CUBAN CRISIS

Actions of the U. S. Army during the Cuban crisis have been outlined by the Department of Defense.

In preparation for possible operational missions throughout the Cuban crisis, the Army pre-positioned combat forces, established a logistical base in Florida, and intensified training of all alerted forces.

U. S. Army Forces, Atlantic, (USARLANT) was created on Oct. 16, 1962, when Department of the Army notified the U. S. Continental Army Commander, General Herbert B. Powell, that he was designated as Army component commander, responsible for all Army forces, to assist Admiral Robert L. Dennison, Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic, (CINCLANT) in contingency planning.

General Powell's first task was to enlarge plans for Army participation in CINCLANT's operations and to be prepared to carry out whatever actions were required. To his headquarters at Fort Monroe, Va., he added 218 officers to assist in the planning task. Men in the USARLANT part of the headquarters worked on a 24-hour basis to accomplish these objectives.

Another concurrent task was to establish, under Maj. Gen. George T. Duncan, USA, USARLANT Forward, co-located with U. S. Air Forces, Atlantic advance headquarters at Homestead Air Force Base, Fla.

USARLANT Forward represented General Powell on the ground and coordinated all Army activities in the base areas in the southeastern United States. This small staff was to be the nucleus on which General Powell would expand his operating headquarters if operational

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plans were put into effect.

Lt. Gen. Hamilton H. Howze, Commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps, was the designated Joint Task Force Commander under Admiral Dennison for control of possible future joint operations. In this capacity he and his staff were involved in greatly expanded planning and supervisory missions.

Major elements of Strategic Army Corps were withdrawn from the U. S. Strike Command and designated for use as USARLANT forces--altogether more than 100,000 officers and men. All elements were put in an advanced alert status during the early days of the Cuban crisis in mid-October. Forces included Infantry, Armored and Airborne Divisions, and Logistical troops.

The 1st Armored Division began moving from Ft Hood, Tex., to Fort Stewart, Ga., on October 23. The move required 2,000 flat cars, 299 other equipment cars, and 200 passenger cars carrying some 5,000 troops. A major segment of the personnel of the Division moved by air to Georgia, while the remainder of the personnel moved with the Division's equipment by rail.

All units began a series of intensive training exercises to maintain their combat readiness. Airborne troops participated in exercises involving battle group air movements and parachute drops while the 1st Armored Division engaged in amphibious exercises on the Florida beaches.

The 2d Logistical Command, commanded by Brig. Gen. Horace G. Davisson was expanded into a new organization, the Peninsula Base Command, with headquarters at Opa-locka Air Force Base, Fla. The mission of this command was to provide logistical and administrative support to all Army troops in the Florida area. The Peninsula Base Command was composed of medical, engineer, ordnance, transportation boat, and terminal service units, with a strength

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of more than 10,000.

Army Air Defense battalions equipped with HAWK and HERCULES missiles, were moved to Florida by rail and air from points as far away as Texas and northwestern United States. After occupying tactical positions in Florida, these units went on around-the-clock alert under the operational control of Commander-in-Chief, North American Air Defense Command.

Also, plans were perfected for the call-up of high-priority Army National Guard and Army Reserve units which might have been needed in the event assault operations were initiated. Every possible readiness action, short of informing units and individuals, was taken by Army and Corps headquarters in the United States.

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